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# Review of Gale Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine

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Medicine - Alternative

1274. **Gale Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine**, edited by Kristine Krapp, Jacqueline L. Longe. Detroit, MI, Gale Group, 2001. 4v., 1,937p., illus. (part in color), bibliog., index. [ISBN 0-7876-4999-6set](#). \$350.00. LC Call no.: RR733.G34 2001.

**Subjects:** Alternative Medicine-Encyclopedias.

44 contributors.

**Reviewer:** Steve Brantley, Resident Librarian, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, [jbrant1@uic.edu](mailto:jbrant1@uic.edu)

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The **Gale Encyclopedia of Alternative Medicine (GEAM)** contains a very large collection (nearly 750) of articles and resources on alternative therapies, Herbs/remedies, diseases and conditions, bringing together knowledge spanning disparate histories, cultures and nations. The contemporary enthusiasm for alternative medicine in this country has caused the allopathic medical community to take notice of the measurable benefits patients receive from botanical medicine and mind or body centered therapies. **GEAM** is the nearly comprehensive collection of information on the varieties of treatments and therapies available.

Because of alternative medicine's fairly recent acceptance by only some in the traditional medical community, Information about non-western treatments was and is still disparate, often outdated and generally difficult to come by. **GEAM** solves this problem by pulling together a wide variety of herbal, bodywork and non-western treatments. The 4-volume set categorizes therapies, Herbs/remedies and Diseases/conditions and arranges them all alphabetically so a user need not first find the remedy section and then seek the alphabetical entry. Within each entry, based on its rubric, the entries are standardized to include several facets of information about the entry. For "Therapies" these include: origins, benefits, description, preparations, precautions, side effects, research and general acceptance, resources, and key terms. For "Herbs/remedies" they include: general use, preparation side effects, interactions, resources and key terms. Finally, for "Diseases/conditions" they include: definition,

description, causes and symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, allopathic treatment, expected results, prevention, resources and key terms. The inclusion of resources and key terms in each is especially helpful as it provides a small bibliography for every entry and keywords for further research. A section at the end of the encyclopedia provides a list of organizations, national and international, related to the alternative therapies and techniques. This list will undoubtedly become obsolete over a long time, but its efficacy in the short term is stable.

**GEAM** is illustrated with stock medical photographs, charts, and other illustrations. Unfortunately, the quality of the black and white photographs leaves much to be desired and the majority of the illustrations are grainy and lack sufficient detail. Each volume, however, does contain a color illustration segment, which provides excellent color photographs or illustrations of medicinal plants and supplements. These are referenced at the end of each entry that has a corresponding color illustration, but even so, it is inconvenient to have to page through to this section to see the detail. The photo gallery, as it is called, is identical in each of the four volumes which leads one to think that not only are the color illustrations inconvenient, but they are also scant.

The entries are clearly written and avoid medical terminology as best they can, while providing scientific plant names and chemical names where necessary. While the entries are well cross-referenced, entries describing a disease or condition calling for numerous treatments already mentioned tend to repeat the previous information verbatim. With frequent use, this repetitive aspect of the encyclopedia could detract from its otherwise informative articles. Other problems encountered were occasional typographical errors, and incorrect measurements, though these only occurred when describing the size of a medicinal plant for instance, and not in any relation to suggested dosages of medicine.

To order this title, click here [ISBN 0-7876-4999-6set](#)